

## **Historic, archived document**

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.





No. 387

December 14, 1939.

## THE NEED OF WATER IN A WELL-BALANCED DIET

To drink or not to drink water with meals is a question often discussed by people who are anxious to conform to good dietary practice, says

\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name) (Title) (Institution)

The United States Department of Agriculture in the new Yearbook "Food and Life" states that unless water is used to flush food into the stomach to avoid chewing properly, there seems no adequate reason why satisfying amounts of water should not be taken at mealtimes. Children should not be allowed to fill up on water, however, just before or during the early part of a meal.

Some authorities class water as a food and some do not. But all agree that water, as well as oxygen and foodstuffs, is essential to human life. In addition to water drunk plain and in beverages, large amounts also are consumed in foods, \_\_\_\_\_ points out. Many common foods are more than 50 percent water. Even those that look dry contain some moisture.

The bodies of normal persons of the same size do not vary much in water content. Water accounts for about 60 to 70 percent of body weight. Some of this is in the form of blood, urine, sweat, and tears. The muscles, digestive juices, and internal fluids of the eyes and joints contain large proportions of water.

One reason why water is needed constantly, is to keep up the necessary supply of normal body fluids. Another is to transport food through the digestive system and to help eliminate the waste products of the body. Water helps

(More)



to regulate body temperature and takes part in many chemical processes within the body.

A normal man of average size, living and working under comfortable conditions of temperature and humidity, loses about 1-1/2 pints of water a day through the skin and in the air from the lungs. Heavy perspiring increases this loss. Another loss of 2 to 5 pints a day occurs by way of the kidneys and bowels. In the summer more water is usually lost through the skin and less by the kidneys, than in winter.

No general recommendation can be given as to how much water a person needs, since people differ so widely in their activities and live in different climates, wear different clothing, and eat different foods. The satisfaction of thirst usually takes care of the need for water.

# # #

